HAZARD ALERT – TRAINING & PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT IS REQUIRED FOR ALL UNIVERSITY OF REGINA LABORATORIES

This information is intended for all personnel working in University of Regina laboratories. On December 29, 2008 a flash fire occurred at the University of California, Los Angeles leaving a research assistant with serious burns over 43% of her body and 18 days later she died in the hospital.

The research assistant was working with t-butyl lithium, a chemical compound that ignites when exposed to air, when her equipment came apart causing her gloves and clothing to catch fire.

Factors believed to be associated with the fatal accident:

- She may not have been properly trained in safe chemical handling practices and may never have received safety training.
- She was not wearing appropriate personal protective equipment.
- A safety inspection two months before the fire had documented these and other issues and the issues had not been corrected.

The University of Regina requires wet laboratory personnel to:

- Complete WHMIS and Chemical & Laboratory Safety training. New students and staff must complete this training before working in a laboratory. The next course will be in July 2009, contact Christine Dehm for more information.
- Wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE). Laboratory personnel must wear appropriate PPE at all times when in a laboratory. The equipment can be purchased at Science Stores.
- Receive specific training for each research area, document any training received or given, and have appropriate supervision.

All University of Regina wet laboratories are equipped with PPE, emergency shower & eyewash stations, first aid kits, fire extinguishers, and spill kits.

If you do not know where these items are located or are not well versed with these items, PLEASE ask your supervisor or contact Health & Safety immediately.

For more information contact Health and Safety - phone 585-4776/5487 or 337-3184